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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 003914

SIPDIS

WHA FOR DAS FISK
WHA/CCA FOR KEVIN WHITAKER
USEU FOR TODD HUIZINGA
IO/UNP

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [CU](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: CUBA: MFA ON INVITING DISSIDENTS TO SPANISH
NATIONAL DAY, UN ANTI-EMBARGO RESOLUTION

REF: A) MADRID 3552 B) BRUSSELS 4080 C) SAINZ E-MAIL

OF 10/6 D) STATE 215870

Classified By: Political Counselor Kathy Fitzpatrick; reasons 1.5 (B) and (D).

1. (C) Poloff contacted MFA Deputy Director General for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Pedro Gomez de Olea on 10/7 to discuss reports that the Spanish Embassy in Havana was planning to break with EU policy by not inviting dissidents to its national day reception on 10/12. Gomez de Olea, who had clearly anticipated poloff's call, said he had no information to provide because the decision on whether to invite dissidents would be made by Foreign Minister Moratinos himself. He said that, to his knowledge, no final decision had been made.

2. (C) Gomez de Olea (please protect) indicated a certain exasperation with the issue, saying it had been his understanding that the GOS would comply with EU policies calling for the inclusion of national day event, but that it now seemed FM Moratinos felt he had to make the decision himself. Gomez de Olea said it was likely no decision would be made until right before the 10/12 event and that he would likely learn of it at the same time we did. He added that it was well known that the GOS wanted to revisit EU measures against the GOC to find "more effective" tools, but his tone suggested frustration with the way in which the issue of invitations is being handled by FM Moratinos.

3. (C) Poloff inquired about the accuracy of news reports that Cuban FM Perez Roque had told Moratinos in New York that noted political prisoner Raul Rivero would not be released if Spain invited dissidents to its national day event, comments which Popular Party politicians denounced as blackmail. Gomez de Olea scoffed, saying that Perez Roque had not made such a statement, but that in fact his comments were even "more insulting" than those reported. He said Perez Roque demanded not only the lifting of EU measures undertaken in the wake of the 2003 GOC crackdown on dissident, but also the full revision of the EU Common Position to remove all European political conditions on improved ties with Cuba.

//CUBAN ANTI-EMBARGO RESOLUTION//

4. (C) Poloff took advantage of the conversation to review ref D points regarding the upcoming Cuba embargo resolution. Gomez de Olea said Spain would hew closely to past EU practice, including voting in favor of the Cuban resolution while criticizing GOC human rights practices in an Explanation of Vote. This was GOS policy under the Aznar Government as well. We will follow up by delivering ref D points to the MFA Office of UN Affairs.

//COMMENT//

5. (C) Moratinos' positions on Cuba continue to undermine the Zapatero Administration's contention that human rights will remain on the forefront of GOS policy towards Cuba. Instead, Moratinos appears to favor "dialogue at any cost" with respect to Cuba and seems willing to risk the ire of both the EU and the USG in order to improve relations with the GOC. Even if Moratinos does opt to invite dissidents, this episode makes it abundantly clear that the GOS will continue to chip away at EU resolve to hold the GOC to at least minimal human rights standards. Given Spanish public opposition to U.S. policy towards Cuba, the Zapatero Government could be tempted to portray any rapprochement with Havana as yet another demonstration of its "independence" f